This was a complete distortion of the truth. Even the number of the regiment was wrong.

With progressing anarchy at the top, it was becoming increasingly difficult for us in the Twelfth Army to maintain discipline among the troops. Conditions in other armies were no better.

THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE IN MOSCOW

About this time the government tried to restore its prestige by calling a National Conference in Moscow, a huge gathering of representatives of existing and non-existent organizations, including 300 members of the four Tsarist Dumas; 400 representatives of the newly elected Municipal Councils; 300 delegates of consumer unions; 100 delegates of the Executive Committee of the Soviet of Workers and Soldiers; 100, of the Executive Committee of the Soviet of Peasants; 100, of the army committees; 100, of labor unions; 120, of associations of manufacturers; 100, of the union of landowners; 100, of universities; 75, of professional groups; 80, of national minorities. In addition, individual invitations were to be extended.

The obvious purpose of this list was to stress the importance of small reactionary groups in comparison with those representing peasants, workers, and soldiers.

True, the government declared in advance that no votes would be taken and that the only objective of the conference was to allow the various groups to air their views. This statement, however, did not explain why it was necessary to invite a hundred landowners who had only one thing to say—that the land reform demanded by the peasants was sheer robbery.

The whole plan impressed me and my Iskosol friends as absurd. But this was a matter of high policy to be handled by the All-Russian Executive Committee. The Twelfth Army had five seats in the conference, and Iskosol appointed Kuchin and four other committeemen to go to Moscow. Kuchin accepted reluctantly. "What shall I do in that circus?" he asked his companions.

He returned from Moscow disgusted and furious. All the reactionary forces—the landowners, manufacturers, the majority of the four Dumas, and the military high brass led by Kornilov—had rallied for an attack against the Soviets and the army committees. Their common watchword was: Russia needs a strong government independent of the people to put an end to the revolution. This was most effective propaganda . . . for the Communists!

Despite the insistent request of Kerensky that he keep away from